

**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**LANDS HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA**  
January 24, 2022, 5:00 P.M.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**III. ROLL CALL** - Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**Members Present:** Acting Chair Greg Smith, Wade Bryson, Wáahlaal Gíidaak

**Members Absent:** Michelle Hale

**Liaisons Present:** Chris Mertl, Parks and Recreation; Lacey Derr, Docks and Harbors

**Liaisons Absent:** Dan Hickok, Planning Commission

**Other Assembly Members Present**

**Some Members of the Public Present:** Brian Maller, Loren Jones

**Staff Present:** Dan Bleidorn, Lands Manager; Roxie Duckworth, Lands & Resources Specialist; Jill Maclean, CDD Director

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – The agenda was approved as presented.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - November 29, 2021 Draft Minutes were approved as presented.

**VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - No public participation.

**VII. AGENDA TOPICS**

**A. 2021 City Foreclosure Property Disposal**

Mr. Bleidorn discussed this topic. Wáahlaal Gíidaak asked when making contact, how often and by what means. Mr. Bleidorn replied that our involvement at Lands is that we are not involved until we have the Clerks deed. Prior to that it is with the City tax office, in which they try to do whatever they can to get a hold of the property owners, Lands does the same. For example, last week I received a name of somebody who might know the property in the Flats. This came in as we were evaluating the property and we do everything we can to reach out to the previous owners or anybody who would know anything about them. Our goal is to get the property tax value back, and if we can avoid foreclosing or if the previous owners can work with another entity to come to an agreement with property taxes, we generally try to go that approach, and then, if all else fails, then we will sell the property.

Mr. Mertl asked if we make this motion does it automatically trigger the disposal or are the various City staffs consulted first, is that just that concept encapsulated into the motion. Mr. Bleidorn replied that we've already spoken with the City departments and the motion we're requesting tonight is based on those comments. It has been determined that there's no real public use for the City to retain these properties and we are requesting a motion to work towards disposal.

**Motion passed to direct the attorney to draft and introduce ordinances that authorize disposal of these properties because of delinquent property taxes. No objections.**

**B. Maller Request to Purchase City Property**

Mr. Bleidorn discussed this topic. Wáahlaal Gíidaak asked to clarify this in terms of our land use plan, if this doesn't impact anything that we have planned moving forward or if we are clear in terms of any plans we have for the City property, as it looks like it carves out like an interesting

chunk of the large area that the City owns. Mr. Bleidorn replied that is a significant piece of property when you are looking at it closely up but looking at the topography it still makes sense. It doesn't negatively affect what we plan on doing out there in the long term. I can see some roads on the spine of the Mendenhall Peninsula and with housing and future City needs with design, I don't see this negatively affecting that.

Mr. Mertl asked who manages this land. Mr. Bleidorn replied to Lands and Resources. Mr. Mertl asked if access is off of Fritz Cove Road, as you go up it becomes steep as you move from left to right across the yellow piece of property. Is it their intent to put their house on the yellow property or their house on the red because I am not quite tracking the request that getting this upper piece of property is going to allow them to put in better driveway access. Mr. Bleidorn replied that based on the topography of the property, having more square footage would allow to better meander the driveway up there, whereas without this, you have to use a majority of the lot for the driveway. I'm not certain if the house will be built on what is currently City property now or built on what is the current yellow outline privately held property. That being said, it doesn't necessarily change my opinions of this property, if the house ends up being built on the flat area that is the City property towards the top or if it's somewhere between the two. Mr. Mertl followed up by commenting that as a planner and a landscape architect he sees that this person likely is going to put a house up in this red area, it is not being used for a driveway that is his gut feeling could be wrong. Is it possible to request a preliminary site plan so we understand why we are potentially selling this piece of property. I guess I just get concerned that this sets up, in my mind, a precedence that we're now going to start getting a flurry of land sale requests on City property from people to expand and develop their residential lots. We've been difficult with other people in the past, having been on this Committee for many years, where we have not allowed development because lot sizes are too small. I'm all for housing development, but I'm concerned about the precedence, this may set for selling additional City properties so people can use it for development.

Mr. Bryson commented that he agrees with Mr. Mertl and from an Assembly seat, as people have requested small slivers of land to make their project or their property more developable, we have set the precedence, or have generally tried to work with the original applicants, at least during my time on the Assembly. This was common to some of the other request that we have had. There was one on North Douglas where we added a sliver land. Reading the brief description of this proposal, and it does say that he is going to increase his driveway size so it will not be as steep and to allow safe access to the higher elevation of the property to build a home. He is saying that he is going to build up there and the additional land will allow for a lower angle driveway, which is what was in the description from Mr. Bleidorn.

Wáahlaal Gíidaak commented that she appreciates the points raised and hadn't considered those. She wanted to know how much land is being considered. Mr. Bleidorn replied that he's requesting about an acre, which is a significant amount and not a sliver of land like the examples on Douglas.

Mr. Bleidorn addressed some of Mr. Mertl's comments. There have been times in the past, where the City was apprehensive to work with an adjacent neighbor if the City property is managed by the Parks and Recreation. We have people who are adjacent to public parklands, open spaces, or green belts that encroach onto City property. They push their fence line in or other issues, and it is not appropriate to cut away at parkland in that manner. If this property was managed by Parks and Rec, I would be recommending against because we don't create saw tooth property lines and we don't

slowly peck away at parkland. Generally speaking, if it's property that's on our disposal list, managed by Lands, and it's made available for future developments, we try to work with the property owners. For new Committee members, when we sell property it goes into the Lands Fund, which can be used to supplement affordable housing or to work on other developments. As much as this is probably a high value property, the funds from it can be used to help facilitate Assembly goals towards workforce housing.

Wáahlaal Gíidaak followed up to ask if the lots to the left and the right of this property can also make this request to also have an extension into city property and would that negatively impact our land use plan or have an impact at all, because I can see, neither of those properties are developed either, and could have the potential to also make this similar request if the terrain is similar to the property and question. Mr. Bleidorn replied that when determining how to move forward with this that is something that we consider. Looking down the whole line of houses, that's something that we would allow for, and I think in this situation, yes, and a lot of times it's almost better when you have a few applicants that have a shared property line because, for them, they can share costs. For us it doesn't create this saw tooth property line. We occasionally get phone calls from people who are curious about this and it's not uncommon for us to field those questions. As this moves forward, we'll do some public notice, and we might have people call us and requesting information on that. If people come forward and want to do something similar, I think, in this case, it would be welcomed, and we will work with them as well.

**Motion passed that the Lands, Housing and Economic Development Committee forward this application to the Assembly with a motion of support for working with the original proposer for the negotiated sale of City property. No objections.**

**VIII. STAFF REPORTS - No Staff Reports**

**IX. COMMITTEE MEMBER/LIAISON COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS - None**

**X. STANDING COMMITTEE TOPICS**

- A. Status of Title 49 Update – Ms. Maclean gave an update. There will be a Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, that will take up downtown parking, a topic the Assembly has been excited to see worked on, I'm happy to report that it is moving forward and hopefully it will be well received when it gets to the Assembly. We have a couple of last questions for the Commission to sort out in tomorrow evening, but I do expect it to be forwarded on to the Assembly. The Planning Commission will also be taking up the Housing and Development Task Force that CDD and Law have worked on updating the pre-application ordinance at the request of some of the developers. The ordinance is being amended to make pre-application conferences optional and not mandatory. Ms. Maclean does have some concerns and will be discussing those more at the Planning Commission. It is the intent that it will streamline the permitting process, my concerns lay mostly with the developers or the applicants if they don't know or understand the process upfront, their applications may not be complete which then may inadvertently extend the review time or the intake process. We'll work through that tomorrow evening, and we'll see how the Committee feels about that.

The other item that we have taken up is an ordinance to amend the marijuana ordinance. Staff is recommending that the five year renewal for conditional use permits for marijuana be

stricken to be deleted. We went through, last year, the first five-year review period and I can appreciate when that marijuana ordinance was written that there were concerns about what the potential impacts would be to the neighbors and other businesses. Working through this process now for over five years with the annual inspection and the renewal of city and state licenses each year, I think that more than ensures that the businesses are operating appropriately and complying. Any instances we've had have been resolved before the five year renewal. My hope is that we can strike that because every time they come up, we have to write a staff report. The applicants have to apply, we have to schedule it on the Planning Commission agenda, and it just takes up time that could be better used elsewhere.

I would also like to make the committee aware that we are still continuing to work on the stream ordinance and hoping to wrap that up, or at least have it before the Planning Commission, probably March. We are continuing to work on coastal zone management at the Title 49 Committee and we will be looking at that on March 3. It's spaced out a little bit because we continue to work on streams and we're onboarding a lot of new staff. I have some travel coming up and we are just trying to wrap up what we have on our plates before we start on new items. We are continuing to work on the accessory apartment ordinance, and you should be seeing that soon, probably around the March timeline for the Planning Commission.

Scott Ciambor has been promoted to Planning Manager. We are really excited to have that position filled and with someone of Scott's caliber. We have now completely filled every staff position that we had vacant we have just hired a brand new permit tech that will be starting in a couple of weeks. We have our two new planners, one the plat reviewer and a Planner II. We now Breckan Hendricks as our new administrative officer who's also just a rock star so she's working on a great permitting presentation, so hopefully we'll have some real numbers for you soon on the number of building permits issued, the number of single family homes, accessory apartments, and everything you've been asking for that we just haven't been able to get to and so I'm really excited that all of this is starting to come together and, hopefully, in a few more months when all the new staff is trained up we'll just keep pushing ahead and getting work done on Title 49.

B. Status of Housing Initiatives - None

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE – February 14, 2022**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT - Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.**